



PROJECT BACKGROUND

USAID is looking to support the successful implementation of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) with the launch of its DR-CAFTA Implementation Project. By working closely with and providing technical assistance to local organizations, the DR-CAFTA Implementation Project will ensure that local actors are fully competent to successfully implement and manage DR-CAFTA upon the project's completion. USAID's project will work with a broad number of local institutions, including the Directorate of Foreign Commerce (DICOEX) of the State Secretariat of Industry and Commerce (SEIC), private firms and business associations, and civil society organizations.

The successful implementation of the DR-CAFTA treaty is seen as a crucial objective for the Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR) and USAID due to its potential to achieve broad-based, sustainable economic growth. The Dominican Republic needs to maintain its current rapid economic growth by increasing its export product diversification and improving its competitiveness. A successfully implemented DR-CAFTA will address these existing limitations by broadening the market opportunities for Dominican exports, increasing private productive investment and targeting labor productivity bottlenecks. The institutional capabilities of various Dominican public and private institutions must however be strengthened in order for the DR-CAFTA to be successfully implemented.

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DR-CAFTA Implementation

USAID PRIMARY GOAL: Help the people of the Dominican Republic build and sustain a democratic, well-governed state that responds to the needs of Dominicans, reduces widespread poverty and conducts itself responsibly in the international system

ABOUT THE PROJECT

USAID support the successful implementation of DR-CAFTA by strengthening key institutions enforcing treaty's provisions and creating more effective public-private sector dialogue.

Strengthening the Dominican Institutional Capacity for DR-CAFTA Implementation by:

Creating a viable institutional framework of public and private sector entities to successfully implement DR-CAFTA; Strengthening DICOEX's capabilities so that it can effectively act as the institutional nexus overseeing DR-CAFTA implementation; Providing institutional support in select priority areas to other entities involved with DR-CAFTA implementation, such as Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, GPO, ONAPI, American Chamber of Commerce and CONEP.

More effective public-private dialogue by: Establishing consultative mechanisms for increased DR-CAFTA public-private sector dialogue; Increasing knowledge of the DR-CAFTA and building civil society ability to research and analyze the impact of DR-CAFTA

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Improving DICOEX's ability to monitor and oversee DR-CAFTA implementation
- Improving DICOEX's research and data analysis capabilities
- Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the various entities overseeing DR-CAFTA implementation
- Providing institutional strengthening support to other entities (e.g., SEA, ONAPI, AMCHAM, etc.) in selecting priority areas
- Forming strategic partnerships and committees to create consultative mechanisms for increased DR-CAFTA public-private sector dialogue
- Facilitating dialogue about DR-CAFTA and generating the institutional capacity and desire for DR-CAFTA research and analysis
- Creating and implementing a DICOEX communication and public relations campaign for DR-CAFTA.

Project Funds: \$5,018,735

Project Duration: September 2007- September 2010

Sector Focus: Policy & Trade Capacity Building and Private Sector Competitiveness

Key Stakeholders:

- Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR)
- SEIC/DICOEX
- Private Firms & Business Assoc.
- Civil Society Organizations